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UNCLAS MAPUTO 000146

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

AF/FO AND AF/S - TREGER

MCC FOR BRIGGS AND GAULL

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: MOZAMBIQUE: PARLIAMENT INAUGURATED; CABINET  
ANNOUNCEMENT EXPECTED SHORTLY

REF: MAPUTO 113 AND PREVIOUS

Not for Internet Distribution.

1. (U) On January 31 the members of Mozambique's new parliament, the National Assembly (Assembly), were invested for a five-year term in a ceremony presided over by outgoing President Chissano. All 250 parliamentarians took their seats, including RENAMO-Electoral Union's 90 members, who only a month earlier had vowed to boycott the Assembly to protest what they claim was massive electoral fraud by the ruling party, FRELIMO (refs). FRELIMO holds the remaining 160 seats. No changes were made in the top ranks of the Assembly; FRELIMO's Eduardo Mulembue and Veronica Macamo were re-elected chairperson and first deputy chairperson of the Assembly, respectively. This will be Mulembue's third five-year term as chair of the Assembly.

2. (SBU) As per a January 26 announcement by President Chissano, all ministers, deputy ministers and provincial governors were relieved of their duties as of midnight the same day. This was the first step in what is expected to be a sweeping change of government by president-elect Guebuza. Although a source close to Chissano opined the transition would be smooth, there are some who predict the changeover will be a difficult one. Many observers believe Guebuza's replacement of Chissano loyalists with his own cadre of supporters will be complicated as long as Chissano remains president of the FRELIMO party. (Note: All presidential appointees, including cabinet members, must be approved by the President of the party. End note.) Post expects Guebuza to announce the new cabinet either late Wednesday or early Thursday, shortly following his Wednesday, February 2 inauguration ceremony.

3. (U) In an attempt to increase nationwide viewing of the presidential inauguration, the government has declared February 2 a national "day of observance." All Mozambican public offices will be closed and Maputo city public transportation will be dedicated to inaugural events.  
LA LIME